Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 01630 071524Z ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 SSM-03 MCT-01 IO-13 AID-05 PC-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 ACDA-07 /108 W

-----071526Z 057132 /43

O 071417Z MAR 77 FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5155 INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN AMEMBASSY CAIRO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 8583

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MASS, PINS, IS
SUBJECT:IAI WORKERS DEMONSTRATE BEFORE EMBASSY AGAINST KFIR BAN

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

- 1. A CROWD OF ISRAEL AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY (IAI) WORKERS, ESTIMATED AT 600-800, DEMONSTRATED FOR SOME 45 MINUTES AGAINST THE U.S. BAN ON THE SALE OF KFIRS TO ECUADOR OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY THIS MORNING. THE DEMONSTRATON WAS ORGANIZED BY IAI'S LABOR COUNCIL AND BUSSED TO THE EMBASSY FROM LOD. REPORTEDLY, IAI MANAGEMENT GAVE THE WORKERS TWO HOURS OF TO PARTICIPATE.
- 2. CARDS PROCLAIMING "KFIRS ARE OUR LIVELIHOOD" WERE CARRIED WHILE THE DEMONSTRATORS LISTENED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE LABOR COUNCIL, SHMUEL KISHALES (A 1975 I.V. GRANTEE), ADDRESS THEM. HE PROTESTED THE BAN AND VOWED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"WE WILL NOT GIVE UP ON THE KFIR." KISHALES TOLD THE CROWD THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A CABLED PROMISE OF SOLIDARITY IN ANSWER TO HIS APPEAL TO CIO-AFL PRESIDENT GEORGE MEANY. AT THEIR REQUEST KISHALES AND THREE OTHER DEMONSTRATORS WERE RECEIVED BY EMBASSY OFFICERS, TO WHOM THEY PRESENTED A BRIEF PETITION WHILE THE DEMONSTRATORS BROKE INTO SONG.

3. KISHALES STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE KFIR SALE TO ISRAEL'S STRUGGLE FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE AND THEIR CONCERN THAT, DENIED THE KFIR, ECUADOR WILL TURN TO THE SOVIET UNION OR AT BEST TO FRANCE. KFIR SALES, THEY SAID, ALSO MEAN THE PURCHASE OF U.S. ENGINES AND SPARE PARTS AND THUS A BOOST TO U.S. INFLUENCE IN ECUADOR. THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE PETITION WHICH BORE ABOUT 80 SIGNATURES:

HIS EXCELLENCY
THE CHARGE D'AFFIARES
THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATE
TEL AVIV

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, MEMBERS OF THE LABOR COUNCIL OF ISRAEL AIRCRAFT INDUSTRIES ARE HEREWITH EXPRESSING, ON BEHALF OF 18,000 WORKERS EMPLOYED AT OUR PLANTS, OUR PROFOUND DISMAY AT THE DECISION OF YOUR GOVERNMENT NOT TO PERMIT THE EXPORT OF KFIR AIRCRAFT TO ECUADOR AND WE FERVENTLY HOPE THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WILL RECONSIDER THIS UNFORTUNATE DECISION. ISRAEL AIRCRAFT INDUSTRIES, LTD., WHICH PROVIDES OUR DAILY BREAD AND THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTRY, DEPENDS ON THIS DELIVERY. BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THIS MATTER, WE ARE HEREWITH ASKING THE CHARGE D'AFFIARES TO RECEIVE A SMALL DELEGATION OF THE LABOR COUNCIL. END OF TEXT

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4. COMMENT: THE DEMONSTRATION WAS PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY AND THE DELEGATION WAS COURTEOUS AND FRIENDLY. (ISHALES WAS ABLE TO RENEW HIS ACQUAINTANCE WITH ONE OF THE RECEIVING EMBOFFS, WHO HAD BEEN HIS CU PROJECT OFFICER IN THE DEPARTMENT.) THE PROTEST WAS TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH THE VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER RABIN TO WASINGTON WHO, PROBABLY SMARTING FROM LAST WEEK'S HAARETZ STORY ACCUSING HIM OF A CAVALIER ATTITUDE TOWARD THE KFIR BAN AND OTHER ISSUES (TEL AVIV 1554), DEVOTED MUCH OF HIS DEPARTURE STATEMENT YESTERDAY AT BEN GURION AIRPORT TO THE KFIR SALE (SEPTEL).

5. MEANWHILE RESENTMENT OVER THE BAN CONTINUES IN THE MEDIA WITH NO SIGN OF ABATEMENT. WHILE ISRAELIS WERE ALSO UPSET OVER THE DENIAL OF CONCUSSION BOMBS, 7THE KFIR BAN SEEMS TO HAVE AROUSED STRONGER EMOTIONS, BECAUSE IF AFFECTS JOBS, THE ECONOMY AND DEFENSE TECH-

NOLOGY AND PERHAPS BECAUSE ISRAELIS CAN MORE READILY SEE A MORAL RATIONALE FOR THE CONCUSSION BOMB REFUSAL THAN IN THE KFIR BAN. DUNNIGAN

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